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Communications and Information

RECORDS MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

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This instruction implements Title 44 United States Code (U.S.C.), *Public Printing and Documents*, Chapters 29, 31, 33, and 35; Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations (CFR), *Parks, Forests, and Public Property*, Chapter XII, Subchapter B; applicable parts of Title 41 CFR, *Public Contracts and Property Management*, Chapter 201; Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Circular A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources*, February 8, 1996; Title 18 U.S.C., *Crime and Criminal Procedure*, Section 2071; Department of Defense Directive (DoDD) 5015.2, *DoD Records Management Program*, April 11, 1997; DoDD 5100.3, *Support of the Headquarters of Unified, Specified, and Subordinate Joint Commands*, November 1, 1988; and Air Force Policy Directive (AFPD) 37-1, *Air Force Information Management* (will convert to AFPD 33-3). It establishes policy and assigns responsibilities for life-cycle management (creation, maintenance and use, and disposition) of information as records in all media through the Air Force Records Management Program. **Failure to observe the prohibitions and mandatory provisions of this instruction in paragraph 3.2.1. by military personnel is a violation of Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice. Similarly, failure to observe the prohibitions and mandatory provisions of this instruction in paragraph 3.2.1. by civilian employees may result in administrative disciplinary action under applicable civilian personnel instructions without regard to otherwise applicable criminal or civil sanctions for violations of related laws.** Send recommended changes or comments to Headquarters Air Force Communications Agency (HQ AFCA/XPPX), 203 West Losey Street, Room 1060, Scott AFB IL 62225-5222, through appropriate channels, using AF Form 847, **Recommendation for Change of Publication**, with an information copy to Headquarters Air Force Communications and Information Center (HQ AFCIC/ITC), 1250 Air Force Pentagon, Washington DC, 20330-1250. Refer to [Attachment 1](#) for a glossary of references and supporting information.

SUMMARY OF REVISIONS

This document is substantially revised and must be completely reviewed.

This is a total rewrite of Air Force Instruction (AFI) 37-122. It transfers the responsibility for the Air Force Records Management Program from the Office of the Secretary of the Air Force (SAF/AAI) to

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Headquarters United States Air Force (HQ USAF/SC) and HQ AFCIC/ITC; redefines roles and responsibilities at all levels; deletes specific process statements to be incorporated in other instructions; adds requirements applicable to contractor records; adds responsibility for record custody to the chief of an office of record; and clarifies support agreement requirement for tenant units. The bar (|) preceding the title indicates a major revision from the previous edition.

1. General. Records play a vital role in managing and operating Air Force activities. They serve as the memory of the organization, a record of past events, and the basis for future actions.

1.1. Commanders and staff agency chiefs must implement records management programs in order to comply with this instruction and protect the rights of the government and persons directly affected by Air Force actions. This provision also applies to commanders of those combatant commands supported by Air Force records management.

1.2. This instruction applies to contractors performing records management support and to the records of any contractor operating under an Air Force contract. Performance work statements must include record keeping requirements (see paragraph 10.).

1.3. Air Force units at all levels must manage records systematically to make sure they are complete, accurate, trustworthy, and easily accessible. Air Force units at all levels must document their organization, function, and activities and preserve their records by implementing effective life-cycle management procedures within their areas of responsibility.

2. Definition of Records. "All books, papers, maps, photographs, machine-readable materials, or other documentary materials, regardless of physical form or characteristics, made or received by any agency of the US Government under federal laws, or in connection with the transaction of public business, and preserved or appropriate for preservation by an agency, or its legitimate successor, as evidence of the organization, functions, policies, decisions, procedures, operations, or other activities of the government or because of the informational value of data in them. Library and museum material made or acquired and preserved solely for reference or exhibition purposes, extra copies of documents preserved only for convenience of reference, and stocks of publications and processed documents are not included." (Title 44 U.S.C., Section 3301).

3. The Air Force Program Guidance.

3.1. Within the Air Force, the Director, Communications and Information (HQ USAF/SC) oversees the Air Force records management program. The HQ USAF/SC appoints the Air Force Records Officer within HQ AFCIC/IT to administer the program, represent the Secretary of the Air Force on records management issues, and oversee the legal requirements of records disposal.

3.2. Air Force personnel and civilian employees:

3.2.1. Must not destroy, dispose of, or mutilate records without proper authority. Unauthorized destruction, disposition or mutilation of records is a violation of Title 18, U.S.C., Section 2071 and includes the possibility of a fine and confinement up to 3 years. Failure to obey the prohibitions in this paragraph is a violation of Article 92, Uniform Code of Military Justice. Failure of civilian employees to follow the prohibitions in this paragraph may result in administrative disciplinary

action under applicable civilian personnel instructions without regard to otherwise applicable criminal or civil sanctions.

3.2.2. Must inform officials of any actual or potential unlawful removal, change, or destruction of Air Force records.

3.2.3. Must distinguish Federal records from nonrecord materials and maintain personal papers separately.

3.3. The Air Force establishes an organized network of records managers at major commands (MAJCOM) and bases for managing the program and ensuring compliance at all levels.

3.4. Each MAJCOM/SC and combatant command/J1 or J6, as appropriate, must appoint a command records manager (CRM) and notify HQ AFCIC/ITC of the name, grade or rank, telephone number, office symbol, and organizational e-mail address of the CRM whenever it changes.

3.5. CRM responsibility applies to Air Force direct reporting units (DRU) and Air National Guard. The 11th Wing supports offices of record in the Secretariat, HQ USAF, and at Bolling AFB DC.

3.6. Field Operating Agencies (FOA).

3.6.1. The Air Force Personnel Center, Air Force Office of Special Investigations, and Air Intelligence Agency senior communications and information officials must appoint an agency records manager (ARM). Upon appointment and subsequent change, notify HQ AFCIC/ITC of the name, grade or rank, telephone number, office symbol, and organizational e-mail address of the ARM.

3.6.2. All other FOA senior communications and information officials may appoint an ARM. Upon appointment and subsequent change, notify AFCIC/ITC of the name, grade or rank, telephone number, office symbol, and organizational e-mail address of the ARM.

3.7. Each Air Force base must appoint a base records manager (RM) and notify the CRM, providing the same information as in paragraph 3.4. At levels below MAJCOM, where there is a communications squadron, the RM is the chief of the records function.

4. The Air Force Records Officer.

4.1. Works with the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) and General Services Administration (GSA) using the guidelines from Titles 36 and 41 CFR.

4.2. Develops and issues policies governing life-cycle management of Air Force records (Air Force Manual [AFMAN] 37-123, *Management of Records*, and AFI 37-138, *Records Disposition--Procedures and Responsibilities* [will convert to AFIs 33-323 and 33-338, respectively]).

4.3. Works with the Archivist of the United States in applying standards, rules, and techniques to improve Air Force management of automated and manual records, to improve how the Air Force identifies, maintains, and protects permanently valuable records, and separates and disposes of records of temporary value under guidelines in Titles 36 and 41 CFR.

4.4. Makes sure the Air Force properly creates and preserves records that document all aspects of its business to protect the rights of the government and of persons directly affected by Air Force actions.

4.5. Makes sure all records generated by processes and prescribed in Air Force standard publications are scheduled.

- 4.6. Certifies to the Archivist of the United States that records no longer of value to the Air Force are disposable.
- 4.7. Obtains approval or concurrence from the Comptroller General of the United States to dispose of records of claims and demands by or against the government or accounts affecting the government and recommends their disposal according to Title 8 of the General Accounting Office Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies.
- 4.8. Negotiates agreements to transfer Air Force records to the National Archives, Federal Records Centers (FRC), other federal agencies, or private organizations.
- 4.9. Implements agreements to store, service, dispose of, access, or use records.
- 4.10. Publishes a records disposition schedule authorizing disposal of agency records and directing prompt and proper disposition of temporary records and retirement of permanent records (see AFMAN 37-139, *Records Disposition Schedule* [will convert to AFMAN 33-339]).
- 4.11. Directs evaluations of the Air Force's Records Management Program ensuring compliance with Federal, DoD, and Air Force requirements.
- 4.12. Issues policy on authenticating records (see AFI 37-121, *Authentication of Air Force Records* [will convert to AFI 33-321]).
- 4.13. Makes sure the CRM maintains a staff assistance visit (SAV) program.
- 4.14. Maintains awareness of developments in the field of records technology and systems, and potential application to the Air Force's record systems.
- 4.15. Reports potential unlawful removal, change, or destruction of Air Force records to The Archivist.
- 4.16. Advises Others.
 - 4.16.1. Provides, upon request, a copy of any report submitted to NARA, GSA, OMB, or the Congress, to the Director of Administration and Management (DA&M), Office of the Secretary of Defense (OSD).
 - 4.16.2. Advises the DA&M, OSD, of any matters about records management that may have DoD-wide implications.
 - 4.16.3. Provides guidance, training, and program evaluation to combatant commands as specified in DoD Directives 5015.2 and 5100.3.
 - 4.16.4. Advises personnel on recovery or reconstruction of records.

5. Command Records Managers (CRM) and Agency Records Managers (ARM) (where applicable).

- 5.1. Manage the records program within their command or agency as specified in Federal laws, NARA guidelines and applicable 33- (and 37-) series Air Force publications. Agency programs will comply with host base guidelines for storage, staging, retrieval, and training.
- 5.2. Establish and manage a training program for newly appointed base RMs and for continuing training and education.
- 5.3. Provide guidance on document imaging and electronic record keeping requirements.

- 5.4. Make sure records generated by command or agency directives are scheduled.
 - 5.4.1. Provide instruction to the office of primary responsibility (OPR) on submitting records disposition recommendation (AF Form 525, **Records Disposition Recommendation**).
 - 5.4.2. When a command or FOA is designated as OPR for Air Force publications, the CRM or ARM makes sure records generated by the prescribed processes are scheduled.
 - 5.4.3. ARMs make sure functional series records disposition is current.
- 5.5. Establish procedures to review contracts for record keeping requirements (see paragraph 10.).
- 5.6. Review each base RM program at least once every 24 months.
- 5.7. Work with the Inspector General:
 - 5.7.1. Identify areas requiring special review by command Inspector General (IG) teams.
 - 5.7.2. Provide compliance evaluation criteria and standards for functional area inspectors.
 - 5.7.3. Establish crossfeed process for IG reports containing records management evaluation.
- 5.8. Establish a local support agreement with the host base records manager for program assistance, training, and staging or shipping services.

6. Base Records Manager (RM). The RM administers the installation program. Their duties fall into three major areas: providing assistance, managing staging areas, and training.

- 6.1. Providing Assistance. The base records manager:
 - 6.1.1. Assists the functional area records managers (FARM), the chief of an office of records (COR), and records custodians (RC) in following the 33-series instructions and guidance published by NARA.
 - 6.1.2. Provides guidance to CORs on using document imaging systems for record storage and authorized disposition of imaged records.
 - 6.1.3. Provides guidance on electronic record keeping requirements and establishes local procedures for creating, transferring, storing, retrieving, and disposing of electronic records.
 - 6.1.4. Sends OPR proposals for electronic storage and document imaging of records to the CRM before implementing them.
 - 6.1.5. Implements automated Records Information Management System according to AFMAN 37-123.
 - 6.1.6. Establishes and implements procedures for processing and approving file plans if not specified by the CRM.
 - 6.1.7. Reviews base directives and forms before publication to ensure compliance with records management directives.
 - 6.1.8. Provides records management guidance, assistance, and services for joint activities, where the Air Force is designated the executive agent, and where a support agreement exists.
 - 6.1.9. Makes sure offices of record receive a SAV at least every 24 months.
- 6.2. Managing Staging Areas.

- 6.2.1. Manages a staging area for temporary storage of records pending destruction or transfer to a federal records center.
- 6.2.2. Provides records staging service for non-Air Force tenant activities, if provided for in a support agreement.
- 6.2.3. Maintains custody of and accountability for staged records and accountability for records transferred to other agencies or FRCs.
- 6.2.4. Establishes processes and procedures for electronically storing records. Makes sure electronic records for all base units are stored electronically when a system is available.

6.3. Training.

- 6.3.1. Train all personnel, including tenant activities' personnel, whose duties include filing, maintaining, and disposing of official records within 3 months of assignment.
- 6.3.2. Training must cover command (agency) unique or local operating procedures or requirements.
- 6.3.3. Include instruction on requirement to identify personal papers, how to identify personal papers, and requirement to maintain them separately from official records.
- 6.3.4. Notify supervisors of the training completion and requirement to record training on their Supervisor's Employee Brief for civilian employees and on AF Form 623a, **On-The-Job Training Record Continuation Sheet**, for Military Personnel.

7. Functional Area Records Managers (FARM). Each base-level unit, principal staff office within an Air Force organization, or contractor appoints a FARM. One or more FARMs may be required based on the span of control, the complexities of the mission, and the size of the organization's functional areas. Where a MAJCOM-approved electronic records management process or application has been implemented, a combination of FARM and records custodian duties may be performed by a designated work-group manager. The FARM:

- 7.1. Serves as the point of contact for and monitors the records management program of their unit or functional area and serves as liaison with the base RM.
- 7.2. Guides and assists CORs and RCs in maintaining and disposing of records.
- 7.3. Assists CORs in preparing files maintenance and disposition plans.
- 7.4. Makes sure each office of record receives a SAV at least once every 24 months. Follows up with COR on corrective actions for discrepancies noted during visits.
- 7.5. Makes sure offices of record promptly retire eligible records and maintain accountability of such records.
- 7.6. Schedules training for personnel who maintain and dispose of records, as required.
- 7.7. Assists the RM in providing guidance on using document imaging systems and electronic storage media for records. Evaluates the effect of document imaging and electronic storage on creating, transferring, storing, retrieving, and disposing of office records. Reports problems to the COR and RM.

8. Chief of an Office of Record (COR).

- 8.1. Responsible for physical and legal custody of all records the office creates or receives, regardless of their physical characteristics, including identifying appropriate disposition authorities for records the office maintains according to AFI 37-138 and AFMAN 37-139.
- 8.2. Makes sure the office creates only essential records, permanently preserves valuable records, and disposes of temporary records according to AFMAN 37-139.
- 8.3. Makes sure each office of record under their purview develops a file plan.
- 8.4. Makes sure records custodians attend records management training. The COR briefs the RC on office functions to include the reason why the office keeps records.
- 8.5. Must justify proposals for establishing electronic records storage and document imaging systems to the RM.
- 8.6. Assists the FARM or RM in reviewing and evaluating automated systems for their effect on creating, transferring, storing, retrieving, and disposing of records.
- 8.7. Appoints a records custodian.

9. Records Custodian (RC). The RC maintains, services, and disposes of the office records. RCs must learn the functional mission of the office of record that the records support and know the purposes the records serve. The RC:

- 9.1. Maintains the office file plan and accountability for active and inactive records.
- 9.2. Makes sure eligible records are promptly and properly prepared to retire or transfer.
- 9.3. Must be proficient on the equipment used for storing the records and retrieving the information from the files.
- 9.4. Knows and implements the records maintenance, use, and disposition policies and procedures for records maintained.
- 9.5. Adjusts office records maintenance practices to provide accurate and effective reference service to the users of the records.
- 9.6. Consults with the COR, and when necessary with the FARM, on problems that affect creating, maintaining, using, and disposing of records.

10. Contractor Records. Records management oversight of a contractor's records is necessary to make sure all Air Force record keeping requirements are met. Agencies or organizations initiating contracts must coordinate them with the applicable command or base records manager.

- 10.1. Contractors performing congressionally mandated program functions must create and maintain records to document these programs. The contract must include requirements for the delivery of all pertinent documentation of contractor program execution.
- 10.2. Many other types of contracts involve creating background data that may have value to the government. Whenever appropriate, agency officials should require the delivery of such background data in addition to a final product. The contractor assigns the appropriate file identification and disposition instructions to all records delivered to the Government.
 - 10.2.1. Contracts to produce statistical analyses specify the delivery of background data that may have value to the contracting agency or to other agencies.

10.2.2. Contracts to produce reports that represent Air Force policy specify the delivery of background data needed to verify assertions or justify conclusions.

10.2.3. Research contracts specify the delivery of background data that have value to the contracting agency.

10.3. Background electronic data and records specified for delivery to the contracting agency must be accompanied by sufficient technical documentation to permit the Air Force to use the data.

10.4. A deferred ordering and delivery data clause should be included in the contract to acquire any data and records that may have value to the Air Force but were not identified in advance.

10.5. Contracts must list records management instructions and directives for contractor compliance.

11. Support Agreements (AFI 25-201, *Support Agreements Procedures*). Base records managers provide support to any and all organizations authorized to receive administrative or logistical support. To validate and defend availability of resources, a support agreement is an essential tool. Local support agreements for records management services can be between the host and Air Force tenants of other MAJCOMs, other services, or DoD components, and non-DoD agencies. Normally it is the responsibility of the receiving activity to assess and generate requests for support. If a support agreement is necessary, the RM must work with the base communications unit Plans Flight to modify an existing agreement or create a new one. Follow the procedures in AFI 25-201.

WILLIAM J. DONAHUE, Lt General, USAF
Director, Communications and Information

Attachment 1

GLOSSARY OF REFERENCES AND SUPPORTING INFORMATION

References

Title 18, United States Code, *Crime and Criminal Procedure*, Section 2071

Title 44, United States Code, *Public Printing and Documents*, Chapters 29, 31, 33, and 35

Title 44, United States Code, *Public Printing and Documents*, Section 3301,

Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, *Parks, Forests, and Public Property*, Chapter XII, Subchapter B

Title 36, Code of Federal Regulations, *Parks, Forests, and Public Property*, Chapter XII, Part 1234

Title 41, Code of Federal Regulations, *Public Contracts and Property Management*, Chapter 201

Title 8 of the General Accounting Office Manual for Guidance of Federal Agencies

OMB Circular A-130, *Management of Federal Information Resources*, February 8, 1996

DoD Directive 5015.2, *DoD Records Management Program*, April 11, 1997

DoD Directive 5100.3, *Support of the Headquarters of Unified, Specified, and Subordinate Joint Commands*, November 1, 1988, with Changes 1 and 2

AFI 25-201, *Support Agreements Procedures*

AFPD 37-1, *Air Force Information Management* (will convert to AFPD 33-3)

AFI 37-121, *Authentication of Air Force Records* (will convert to AFI 33-321)

AFMAN 37-123, *Management of Records* (will convert to AFMAN 33-323)

AFI 37-138, *Records Disposition - Procedures and Responsibilities* (will convert to AFI 33-338)

AFMAN 37-139, *Records Disposition Schedule* (will convert to AFMAN 33-339)

Abbreviations and Acronyms

AFI—Air Force Instruction

AFMAN—Air Force Manual

AFPD—Air Force Policy Directive

ARM—Agency Records Manager

CFR—Code of Federal Regulations

CRM—Command Records Manager

COR—Chief of an Office of Record

DA&M—Director of Administration and Management

DoDD—Department of Defense Directive

DRU—Direct Reporting Unit

FARM—Functional Area Records Manager

FOA—Field Operating Agency

FRC—Federal Records Centers

GSA—General Services Administration

IG—Inspector General

MAJCOM—Major Command

NARA—National Archives and Records Administration

OMB—Office of Management and Budget

OPR—Office of Primary Responsibility

OSD—Office of the Secretary of Defense

RM—Records Managers

RC—Records Custodian

SAV—Staff Assistance Visit

U.S.C.—United States Code

Terms

Chief of Office of Record (COR)—Person designated as head of an office where records are created, received, or maintained; has responsibility for physical and legal custody of records. This can be at staff level (division chief, branch chief, director) wing, squadron, or flight.

Command Records Manager (CRM)—Records managers at MAJCOM, specific FOAs, DRUs, and Combatant Commands for which the Air Force is the executive agent.

Disposition—(1) A comprehensive term that includes destruction, salvage, or donation; transfer to a staging area or records center; transfer from one organization to another; (2) Actions taken with inactive records. These actions may include erasure of data, transfer to a records center, or transfer to the National Archives (Title 36, CFR, Chapter XII, Part 1234).

Disposable—Temporary and approved by NARA for disposal, either immediately or after a specified retention period.

Disposition Instructions—Precise instructions in AFMAN 37-139, specifying the date or event for cutoff, transfer, retirement, or destruction of records.

File—An organized collection of related data, usually arranged into logical records that are stored together and treated as a unit.

OPR—Office (or officer) of primary responsibility (OPR). Any headquarters, agency, or activity having primary functional interest in, and responsibility for, a specific action, project, plan, program, or problem.

Personal papers—Documentary materials belonging to an individual that are not used to conduct agency business. Related solely to an individual's own affairs or used exclusively for that individual's convenience. Must be clearly designated as such and kept separate from the records.

Records—(See paragraph 2.)

Records Custodian (RC)—Person designated within an office of record to manage the internal record

keeping program, having guardianship and control of records.

Retire—The transfer of inactive records to a base records storage area or a Federal records center.

Scheduled—Having final disposition approved by NARA. Scheduling provides mandatory instructions for what to do with records (and nonrecord materials) no longer needed for current Government business.